A Faithful

Warning & Exhortation

TO

FRIENDS:

To beware of

Seducing Spirits;

And to keep on the Armour of Light, in Simplicity and Sincerity, as their best Armour in all

TRYALS.

Written by a Lover of Sincerity, and Traveller for *Sion's* Redemption, and for the removing of all Oppressions from off the Souls of them who have believed,

Steven Crisp.

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A Faithful Warning *and* Exhortation *to Friends.*

DEAR FRIENDS:

YOu know how that God in his infinite Love hath visited us with a very glorious Day, in which his Son of Righteousness is so risen upon us, that the Heavenly Warmth thereof hath quickened and enlightned us, and made us to stand up and serve him in our Day and Generation; and the vertue of that blessed life in Christ Jesus being revealed in the Souls of them who have truly believed, hath given them great power over Death, and hath made them able to grapple with Satan in all his divers appearances, and to overcome him; so that which way soever he hath hitherto sought to eclipse the glory and brightness of this great and notable day of the Lord, he hath hitherto been frustrated in his purpose, and his Instruments have been made ashamed of their work: for all that are true Children of the day, do find that their standing is by Faith, and not by Knowledge, and are by their Faith kept in a holy dependance upon the power of him that can overcome all things, and bring them under; so that whatever doth arise against the Truth, the faith of them that are in it lets them, even in the beginning of it, see to the end of it, and gives them a Certainty in themselves, by which they are settled in patient and quiet waiting to see the thing they believe brought to pass; and this is their Victory even their Faith, and who dwells in this Faith are not weary neither do they faint in all the various Exercises they meet with all by the way, but can endure Contradiction without Discouragement, knowing that whatever it is that riseth up against the power and purpose of God shall in time be laid low.

And this is the same Faith that was once delivered to the Saints in the Primitive days, when Christ the Resurrection and

the Life was preached unto them, in whom they believed, and by whom they were enabled both to do and to ſuffer what his will was, and to withſtand the Torrent and Sea of Contradictions they then met withall, and the Word of God grew mightily, and their Zeal and Courage grew for the Name of God, ſo that no ſtratagem deviſed againſt them could proſper, as long as they kept in the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and held their Faith which they had in a pure Conſcience; here were their great Fortifications, that made them ſo prevalent and immutable viz. *Simplicity* and *Cleanneſs of Mind*; and as long as this continued, they continued of one Heart and Mind, glorifying God, and building up one another, and comforting one another, and were as Epiſtles written in one anothers Hearts.

Now when the Devil ſaw that it was impoſſible to ſtop this glorious work of God by all he could do, by ſtirring up the Prieſts and Rulers againſt them, but their Strength was in the Lord, they ſtanding in their Simplicity and pureneſs of Mind; then the Adverſary ſought out ways, means and Inſtruments how to diſturb their progreſs, by drawing one or other among themſelves from that ſimplicity of the Goſpel of Chriſt in which they had been of one Heart, and had believed and practiſed the ſame things without vain Diſputations, and having found ſome unſtable Souls fit for his purpoſe, he wrought powerfully in them to move Queſtions, which had a tendency to draw others forth to ſtriving about the Queſtion, then one would have it **Thus**, and the other would maintain it to be **So**, neither of them minding whether the Queſtion it ſelf tended to the uſe of Edifying the Church; but a great ſtir was quickly raiſed and that about ſome few Jewiſh Rights, and about ſome right or wrong deſcents of Geonologys, one would prove it **Thus**, and the other **So**, and here was a door opened to let in the Carnal Wiſdom, to be the Weapons of this War, by which the pure innocent Minds of many were corrupted, and ſome whole Houſholds ſubverted; which when the Devil had thus far prevailed,

prevailed, he went on further, and gave Courage to ſome of theſe his High-minded, Heady, Unruly Servants to go abroad thorough the Churches, and Preach up theſe his Queſtions as Doctrines, and to ſeduce and draw away who they could from the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, and theſe were ſo prevalent as to bewitch and betray many; ſo that they were imboldened to withſtand the true Apoſtles in that glorious work in which Chriſt Jeſus had imployed them; ſo that now a great deal of their work was to warn the Poor Flock of Chriſt of theſe Wolves in Sheeps cloathing, and to give out Teſtimonys of their own ſincerity, and againſt theſe deceitful Workers, and to open and unfold the myſterious working of that Evil Spirit, and how it wrought cunningly to make void the offence of the Croſs, that they might carry on the Name and outward Profeſſion of Chriſtianity, with more Reputation and leſs Reproach then at the firſt, for this was the deſign to get the Chriſtians into a falſe Liberty, and to looſen their Hearts from that ſincerity and watchfulneſs which was taught them in the Beginning, and to what a height the ſubtle Serpent carryed on his work, in that day, you may read at large in the Scriptures of Truth, and what ſad and woful work it made in *Corinth*, in *Galatia*, in *Smyrna*, in *Thiatira*, and in *Laodicea*, and alſo in *Achaia*, and what ſorrow and labour it coſt the good Apoſtles, and how the good Spirit was grieved by theſe things, and the Hearts of the Righteous made ſad thereby.

Yet the Enemy had in thoſe days another Stratagem as bad as all the reſt, whereby he ſought to lay waſt the work of God; for after the Goſpel came to ſpread abroad and many were convinced both Jews & Gentiles, many Greeks alſo came to acknowledge the Truth, who had been great ſeekers after natural Wiſdom, and had ſought to Fathom natural cauſes and effects, and had ſtudyed many curious Arts, and Philoſophick ſtrains and methods, which ſuited well with their Heatheniſh Worſhip and Religion, for them to endeavour to find out the benevolent

of malevolent Influences of *Mars*, *Saturn*, *Jupiter*, or the other of the Gods whom they worshipped; but when they came to the acknowledgment of the one only true and living God, the Creator of all, and of Jesus Christ whom he had sent, then they found their curious Arts, Needless, and their Books fit for nothing but the Fire, and burnt in one City as many as were worth 50000 Pieces of Silver: But alas! the Spirit that made use of them was not burnt in several, but wrought cunningly to bring many of those their tricks and quirks in among the poor Believers, and endeavoured to make them believe they were such knowing Men, and had such rare things to acquaint them with, far beyond the Apostles, and then they went to work with the Opposition of Science (as they falsly called it) and then every thing must be questioned and disputed that had not a Philosophick or Natural Reason, to demonstrate to the Senses or Understanding; and hereby was the Faith of some made void, and many were spoyled of their sincerity and uprightness by these vain deceits, and then came in looseness in Conversation: then a **Nicholas** with his **Ranterisme**; a **Jezabel** with her **Pretended Loose** and **wanton Prophecys**; a **Balaam** with his **Coveteous Design** upon the **People** might find some to side with them; for the holy tye and Covenant of their Religion of bearing a daily Cross that was broken; but alas! alas! the effect of these things was very lamentable.

And Dear Friends, having briefly touched at these things, and set these proceedings of Satan against the Truth among the Primitive *Christians* before you, I now come to tell you in great plainness and sincerity what hath for some Months lane upon my Mind relating to this Subject, and concerning the day in which we live, and the dispensation of that Everlasting Gospel which is now Preached again unto us, in which we found the very same blessed Effects as they did; for when we had believed therein, it brought us into great Simplicity, and into cleanness of Mind,

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and into an unfeigned Love and Unity one with another; and from what parts or Countrys ſoever we came, we all ſpake the ſame things, and the Quirking, Querying, Diſputing Wit was brought down, and caſt out from among us, though we could Query and Diſpute the Oppoſers that were without in defence of the Truth, yet we had then no ſuch occaſion among them that Profeſſed Truth; for we were of one Heart and Mind, and Judgment, and in that univerſal Love we laboured to build up one another in our moſt Holy Faith, and to publiſh and make known the Bleſſed Name of Jeſus, in whom we had believed, and many were daily added to the Church, and came to pertake of the ſame Faith, and of the ſame Love, and and grew into the ſame Simplicity of Mind, wherein we found a harmonious Rejoycing in Spirit when ever we ſaw one another: In this ſtate did the Truth preſerve us, and our Faith was firm in that Name and Power by which we were called, that the Lord would go before us and proſper us in his Bleſſed Way, in which he cauſed our Souls to take great delight, and take up the daily Croſs cheerfully, and deny our ſelves for the ſake of him that had called us.

But the Old Enemy of Truth envy'd this our tranquillity quickly, and began to work in ſome where he found a ground to work in, and ſought to lead them from the Simplicity of the Truth, and to exalt their Minds in the ſight of things opened by the Truth, and ſo did not abide in the tender Fear of God, and in the humility of the Innocent Seed, but flew up in Airy Notions and Imaginations, ſome into a falſe Liberty, and others into ſtrange Imaginations of their own growth to ſome high ſtate, and ſo grew heady and unruly, and were hardened againſt Exhortations: rather judging themſelves fit to teach, then to be taught, and theſe drew ſeveral after them thorough an affection that was not ſubject to the Croſs, and became an occaſion of Offence and Stumbling to many who were enquiring after the Way of the Lord, and a great Exerciſe and Sorrow to ſuch as

kept in the Travail and Labour for *Zyon's* Redemption; but tho e that abode in the Faith, knew that the power in which they had believed would arise, and crush down and bruise under that lofty airy Spirit, and all that abode in it, and did not repent and return to their First Love, and do their First Works, and according as we believed, it came to pass, and their werks with which they sought to amuse and astonish the Nations, were co.fo.nded and brought to nought; and divers that did adhere and cleave to that Spirit, were lost and scattered, and grew into Prophaness and Uncleanness, and strove against the Power of God that wrought in his People, to reclaim and regain them, till at length the very power of God turned against them, and cut them off who had been the Troublers.

Yet did not the Serpent leave of attempting to betray the Innocent, but found out other Instruments fit for his purpose, whom he raised up under pretence of some **New Discoveries**, accompanyed with a Voluntary Humility, and a seeming Self-denyal, when indeed the design was to **Exalt Self** and **Mans Work, Witt and Reason above the Eternal Power of God**, and thorough feigned pretences to obtain a Dominion over the Heritage of God, and to impose and obtrude upon them things which were not taught by the living Spirit Christ Jesus in themselves, nor had received by Doctrine nor Message from the true Spiritual Labourers in the Gospel, by which means the Minds of many were betrayed, and they were exercised in contending about some outward Signes or Tokens of their seperation till the weighty matter they should have minded, *viz. How to be kept in the love of God, and in the Heavenly Unity*, was in a great many lost and forgotten, and instead thereof a secret Root of Bitterness grew up, and a hatred against the Prosperity of the Church of God, and the Faithful Servants and Ministers of it, in so much that they lost the very sence of Gods Blessed Presence amongst us, and reckoned he had forsaken us, and thereupon many of them also forsook us, and were as another

another People, and were puffed up with great Expectations of our Downfall, and their own Exaltation, and began to ſpread their deſign of *Seperation* into other Nations to the Hurt of many who were deceived by them; ſo that the tender Love of God, that had wrought in the Hearts of the Faithful Labourers and Miniſters of the Goſpel to the gathering them out of the World, now wrought again effectually, to gather many of them out of this *Self-ſeparation*, and with great Patience and Longſuffering did we travail and labour with many, and the Lord beheld our ſincerity and care, and bleſſed his Work in our Hand, ſo that the Eyes of many were opened to ſee the *Crafty Snares* by which they were entangled, and power was given them of God to break thorough and teſtify againſt the crafty Wiles of them that had deceived them, and the Lord aroſe in his great and mighty Power in and among his People, and ſet an Eternal Judgment on the Head of that Spirit and its work of *Diſſention* and *Seperation*, that it had wrought, and it could then proceed no further, but withered and came to nought; and thoſe who willfully reſiſted the Offers of the Love of God, and of his People, they grew more and more corrupt, and periſhed wholly from the way of the Lord, and the ſociety of his People, and turned back, ſome into the Worlds Worſhip and Religions and others into the groſs Polutions that are therein, and the Churches of Chriſt who ſtood faithful and true to the leading of his Spirit, came to have reſt from that extream labour and travail which they had lain ſeveral Years under, by reaſon of theſe things; and God fulfilled the Prophecys of divers of his faithful Servants, who by their Faith had ſeen, and by the Spirit had teſtified at the beginning of that Spirits-work, what the end of it ſhould be; for many there were who ſaw, *That it was from the Earth, and thither it would return*; and there it was ſwallowed up, and all its ſubſtance; and as many as denyed to be warned, periſhed with it: Then did the Souls of the faithful give glory and honour to God, in whoſe hand is Power and

Dominion,

Dominion, and he reigns on high in his Strength, and is Kign of Saints, and the defence of his Zyon, now henceforth and for ever more.

These Exercises put and stirred up all the Faithful to great vigilence and watchfulness, for the keeping the Enemy out for the future, at least, as much as in them lay; and those that were faithful and antient Friends, both Men and Women, found it incumbent upon them to meet together to watch over the Flock, and to see to the Conversations of them who profest the Truth, that it might answer their Professions; and where the contrary appeared, to deal with them, and to reclaim them if possible, or else to deny them, and to clear Truth and Friends of them, and their disorderly courses; and in this good work the Lord blessed them, and shewed his Presence among them, and gave them Wisdom and Understanding; and they took Care of the *Widows* and *Fatherless*, of the *Poor* and *Afflicted Families* among them, and had the care upon them concerning *Marriages*, that none might come together in a disorderly manner, but that all things might be clear on either side, and the consent of Parents might be obtained before Marriage, and that all things might be kept in good order & savoury in the sight of God and Men: And divers *Epistles* were written from several Elder Brethren for their Encouragement and Direction in this good work; for we knew it was Gods work, and would tend to the limitting of loose and unruly Spirits, who sought *Liberty* more then *Sincerity*; and *Sensuality* more then *Christs Government and their Subjection to the Divine Power of God.* And when some Exalted Spirits came to see unto what this work would tend, they took Offence thereat, and sought to weaken the Hands of the Faithful Friends in this good work, under pretence, *That all must be left to the Witness of God; and if People did not find Judgment in themselves for what they did, they must not be judged by others*, being themselves gone from Truth's Judgment and hardened, then they cryed out of *Innovation* and *Imposition*, and such like.

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And hereupon were many again Seduced, and Subverted, and drawn away from their Stedfastness in the Truth, and began to appear against the good Order of the Lords People, and to reflect upon the Godly Care that lay upon them, with unhandsome and unsavoury Speeches and Writings; till a secret Root of Bitterness and Enmity got into several that had been Convinced; and in this Root the Enemy wrought with great Craft and Subtilty, to draw them from the Blessed Unity that is in Christ Jesus, the true Head of the true Church, and begat them into many Jealousys and groundless Fears of an *Apostacy*, while in the mean time he drew them so far to Apostatize from their first Love and first Works, that they proceeded to expose Friends both in particular and in general, to the Reproach and Scorn of the World, as much as in them lay.

All which was born and suffered with much Long-suffering and Patience, and a great travail lay upon many to endeavour the reducement of them that did thus oppose themselves, for we knew our Sincerity, and knew that the Lord would stand by us, and bless our Work and Labour of Love, and blast their Work of Enmity, and that their striving against the Lord and his blessed Work in the Hand of his Innocent People would not nor could prosper, we doubted not at all, but he that had stood by us and helped us from the beginning would still stand by us, and give his Truth and People the Victory over every Tongue and Pen that rose up in Judgment against us, as he hath done to this day and their work is manifest, and they can proceed no further, Blessed be his Name for ever.

Now Dear Friends, I have made this brief Relation of the forementioned Passages, that they that are young in the Truth may see, and they that are Older may be put in mind, how the Old Adversary of Truth hath already wrought in this our day, and what hath been the end and tendency of his Work in all his various Appearances, even as in the Primitive days, to stop the bright shining of the Gospel, if he could; and where-

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as he is not able to do that, his next work is to ſee whom he may devour, that is, whom he may ſo inſnare and intrap with his ſubtle Baits and Gins, as that he may, firſt, *Draw them from the Simplicity of the Truth*; next, *Into an Exaltedneſs in Knowledge*; then, *Into Prejudice and Enmity againſt thoſe that ſtands in the way to hinder their Exalted Notions*; & by this time he hath taught them to break the Law of Charity, and to think evilly of the Upright, and to diſeſteem the bleſſed Unity and Fellowſhip that is in the Truth, and then they are fitted for *Schiſme* and *Seperation* upon one ſpecious pretence or another: Therefore how **watchful** ought every one to be, for the keeping out this deſtroying Spirit, which hath brought ſeveral already to that pitch of Enmity and Defyance to the Truth and People of God, that if it had been told them in the days of their tender Convincement, they would have been ready to ſay with *Hazael*, *Is thy Servant a Dogg that he ſhould do theſe things?*

And Friends, know this for certain, that Satan is ſtill working, and ſeeks to winnow you; and where there doth remain after a long Convincement, a Lightneſs and an Airyneſs in any ſuch are eaſily driven with his pernicious Winds; and to this purpoſe he hath ſtirred up ſome in ſeveral Citys & Countrys ſuch as he knows are fit for his purpoſe, who never knew a real Mortification upon that Earthly Senſual Wiſdom that's from beneath, but have too much ſaved that alive in themſelves, which God did in their firſt Convincement paſs a Sentence of Death upon; and theſe, as they cannot reach to a partaking of the Life of Truth in themſelves, no more can they reach nor attain to the hidden Myſtery of the Unity that the Lords People have one with another in that Life of Truth, but another Life and a Power they have, and in it they grow Head-ſtrong and Fierce Deſpiſers of them that are born of the Spirit, yea, they grow in Wiſdom from one degree to another, but its neither *Pure* nor *Peaceable*, *Gentle* nor *eaſy to be intreated*, by their Fruits ye may know them; for from this Wiſdom are they often found ſtart-

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ing, ſome ſubtle and abſtruſe queſtions, to amuſe the Minds of the Simple, and to cauſe the Weak in the Faith to Err, and to draw away unſtable Souls after them, as if they had brought forth ſome new Diſcoverys, and then here's work for *Diſputing Witts*, by all which the Minds are drawn farther and farther from the true Watchfulneſs, that becomes thoſe that have ſuch an Enemy to deal withal.

Hence it is that all thoſe *Jangliugs* are ſprung about the Forbidden Fruit, *what it was, and whether good for Food, or not good for Food*; upon which ſome have cloſed with that primitive and firſt Error, with which *Eve* was enſnared, & have judged it, *good for Food*; yea, and have fed upon it too, till their Knowledge hath grown greater in the Evil then in the Good. Hence it is that another ſtarts Queſtions about the *Mortality* or *Immortality* of the *Soul*. Another *Of the ſtate of the Soul after the Death of the Body, whether it abides a ſingular Eſſence, or ceaſeth to have any ſinguler Eſſence or being*. Another about the *ſtate of the Body after Death*. Another about *How many Bodys one and the ſame Soul may or muſt have at ſundry times*. Another *How long the Wicked Men or Angels muſt endure the Wrath of God for Rebellion*. Another comes forth and ſays, *There is no ſuch thing as Wrath or Anger in God, and all that is written thereof in the Holy Scriptures is but metaphorically ſpoken*: and many more ſuch like Fantaſys and doting Queſtions, doth this Birth bring forth for the Tryal of your Faith and Stedfaſtneſs in the Truth, by which the Enemy is, as I ſaid, trying and winnowing, to ſee where he may meet with his own and may deceive and draw away ſome from the Faith and Unity, and teach them ſome other Way and Doctrine beſides the Narrow Way of Regeneration.

Now my Dear and well beloved in the Lord, you are Witneſſes unto this day in how great Simplicity and Plainneſs of Speech we have Preached the Word of God among you, from the day the Lord ſent us forth to this day: we came not unto you with inticeing Words, we needed not Logical nor Phylo-

ſophical Demonſtrations; for our Teſtimony had the Demonſtration and Evidence of the Spirit of Truth in your Hearts and our Words, or the Word of God in our Mouths, hath not altered nor changed unto this day, but remains the ſame as it ever was. The great Doctrine of the Goſpel was and is *Regeneration*, without which there's no entrance, the only means and way to attain it, was and is that Light and Grace that comes by Jeſus Chriſt, and ſanctifys, and purifys, and brings to him, by whom the entrance is miniſtred into the Kingdom; theſe things have we declared, and theſe things ye have believed, and in this Faith are many of our Faithful Brethren fallen aſleep, and their precious Souls are at reſt with the Lord: And herein if ye abide ſtedfaſt to the end, ye ſhall do well.

And as concerning all ſuch who ſeek to trouble any of your Minds with the things above mentioned, or any other ſuch ſubtle and crafty Queſtions, keep you your Habitations in the Power of God, and you will daily come more and more to diſcern the tendency of them, how it is a Spirit that works againſt the Croſs, and ſeeks to cauſe the Offence of it to ceaſe, that they might bear a *Profeſſion of Truth*, and live in a *Looſe Converſation* without Controule or Judgment; and you will ſee them come to nought like others before them.

And for the carrying on this kind of Libertiſme, all theſe ſtrange Notions are hatched and ſpread about to corrupt the Minds of whom they can; for the Devil who is the Author of them, knows well how to apply them to the advancement of his own Kingdom, and for the eaſing or rather hardening the Conſciences of ſuch who receive theſe things, that they may thereupon ſhake of the Senſe which ſometime they had of the Righteous Judgment of God, and ſlight the Judgment of his People, and give the Reins to their Luſts and Paſſions; and yet all the while make a Profeſſion and Outſide Appearance among the Innocent People of God. Oh Friends! theſe are the *Blotts* and *Spotts* that are among us; theſe are they by whoſe means the

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holy Name of God is *Blaſpemed*, and his bleſſed pure way *Evil ſpoken of by many*, and the *Hearts of the Upright made ſad from day to day*; Theſe are ſuch as coſt the Apoſtle tears when he writ, *I told you of them before, and now tell you weeping; they are Enemys to the Croſs of Chriſt.* Theſe cauſe the Feet of ſome to ſtumble and others to periſh from the way of the Lord, and yet all the while carry a ſecret Bolſter under them to bear themſelves upon having let in a belief or Suppoſition, either that there is *no ſuch Wrath and Judgment to expect from the Hand of God*, as hath been largly ſpoken and written of by the Prophets Chriſt and his Apoſtles, and all the faithful Miniſters of the Goſpel unto this day: *Or if there be Wrath and Judgment to be revealed, it will be but for a time, and then they ſhall be reſtored to Glory and Happineſs, or if they fall ſhort of a due fitting and preparing for the Kingdom of God on this ſide the Grave its no great matter, for they ſhall have other oppertunitys even in this World hereafter, when they ſhall be born in other Bodys.*

Some few ſecretly boulſter themſelves up and endeavour to poſſeſs others with the Suppoſition or Notion of the *finite* Puniſhment of Wicked Men and Devils in the World to come, as where the Holy Scriptures mention, *viz. Everlaſting Fire*, the Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt *never* to be forgiven in *this World*, nor in *that which is to come*, *Eternal Judgment*, *Vengeance of Eternal Fire*, *The ſmoak of their Torment ſhall* aſcend up *for ever and ever*, &c. (as plainly declared by Chriſt and his Holy Apoſtles and Goſpel Miniſters) theſe they limit only to Ages.

Another he boulſters himſelf up with a belief, *That if he doth Evil, his Hell is only here in his own Conſcience, but when he leaves the World all things will be as if they had not been, and the Soul ſhall dye with the Body, and ſuffer an Annihilation as well as the Body, or ſhall be ſwallowed up out of all particularity, as a drop of Water into the Sea, and ſo then what matter.* And this is the Evil Seeds Man, ſowing theſe curſed Seeds of *Fleſhly*, *Liberty* and *Ranteriſme*, even in our day, and hath prevailed upon ſome to their De-

ſtruction, and they that are ſeduced, as the Apoſtle ſaith, do *wax worſe and worſe*, ſeducing whom they can by theſe their pernicious ways, the conſequences whereof are woful and Lamentable to conſider, and hath coſt me and many more great Sorrow and Grief; and truly Friends the weight of theſe things was heavy upon my Mind for ſome time, and it lay upon me to give a Warning to all that have an ear to hear, leſt they ſuffer their minds to be corrupted by the ſubtle laying in wait of Satan and his Inſtruments; for though I know there's many Thouſands who knows the price and value of their Immortal Souls, and many who have truly travelled for the Redemption of Souls, who do not ſtand in need to be warned of theſe ſubtle deſignes, but do live in that which comprehends the Devil and his Crafty working, yet I am drawn forth in true Love and Tenderneſs to the Weak, and ſuch as are not yet grown to a Stability in the Everlaſting and Elect Seed of God, to exhort them *to take heed to themſelves and to be ſtirred up to Faithfullneſs and Diligence, and to Approve their Hearts in the ſight of God in Sincerity and Lowlyne*s, *that ſo they may feel his ſecret preſerving Power to keep them from theſe Gins and Nets of the Cunning Hunters who lye in wayt to beguile and betray whom they can.*

And Friends, to you who have not known the depths of Satan I have a few things to offer to your ſerious Conſideration, *Firſt*, You know in what manner you were Convinced, and how your Underſtandings were opened & you brought to the Acknowledgment of the truth; Was it not by the ſhining of that true Light of Chriſt Jeſus in your Soules, which by its inward working ſhewed you that your Soules were made ſubject to a power of darkneſs, that had defiled them and made them unfit for God to dwell in & to take delight in; then you ſaw what a Contrariety and diſproportion there was between the **pure Light** and your **Impure Souls**, whereupon Judgment from God was manifeſt for the curbing, limitting and deſtroying that power that had thus defiled the Minds and Conſciences; and when ye came to believe this

this Judgment to be the very Judgment of God, ye ſubmitted to it, as right and due unto you; and as ye thus ſubmitted to it, ye quickly found ſome power to withſtand the Temptations of the dark power that had captivated you: and did you not then feel your Souls ſomewhat eaſed, and a hope raiſed, *That as ye abode faithful unto that Light, you might obtain power to withſtand your Souls Enemy in all his Appearances*; ſo that the Faith that was delivered unto you in the beginning was, that your Souls ſhould be ſo ſanctified, fitted and prepared, as to become a Habitation for God, and that he would ſo ſtrengthen you, that ye ſhould be able to ſtand againſt the Devil and his Power, who ſought to defile and deſtroy the Soul. And they that have been diligent and kept this Faith, have found it to be a Shield and a Defence in the times of their Trya's and Tempations; ſo that they have found Victory by it, and their Souls have come to know a Deliverance from under the Enemys power, and have received Ability to ſerve the Lord, and have felt the bleſſed Freedom and Liberty in the Truth, which they ſo much deſired and longed for.

Now, wherefore hath all this work been to redeem the Soul, and to convert it, and change it from under the dark power, and to bring it under the Heavenly and glorious power of Chriſt Jeſus? I ask them that have known this work; Was it only for a **few Days** or **Years** that we are to continue here in theſe Bodys? Or was it not the effect of the Eternal Love of God in Chriſt, that in him our Souls might be Eternally happy? I know ſuch as have truly known this travail, do know the Soul to be more worth then the value and worth of the whole World, and they are not liable to the Seducements of ſuch as would undervalue the Soul. But alas! there's too many that never knew what it was to travail for Souls, neither in themſelves nor in others, but have received a Sight and Knowledge of things at a diſtance, in a ſpeculative way, as lookers on, and theſe having grown up into a Profeſſion by a ſight, without a real work in themſelves, are

very

very ready to be Seduced, and to ſeduce others, and wanting the ſubſtance that never waxeth old, are always itching after ſome new thing, which for a time ſeems to be delightful to them, till a newer thing is preſented, and then they are for that alſo, and ſo are always gadding and changing their ways, till at laſt they are by the maſtering ſubtilty of their Souls Enemy (who hath power in ſuch unſtable Minds) led back again into the World, or into divers Sects, Heaps and Opinions, that are of the World; and a falſe Liberty gets up in them, in which they grow Heady and Stubborn, and look upon every one that ſeeks to reclaim them as their Enemy, and let in hard and bitter Thoughts againſt them, and the Enemy fills them with prejudice, and in that ſtate they ſeek for the failings of others, and feeds upon them as Bread to ſtrengthen themſelves, and ſo grow more and more eſtranged from the Innocent Life that is in Jeſus, and that he hath given for Food for the Children of the Kingdom.

Oh! this is a ſad Condition; and I have often with deep ſorrow lamented the ſtate of ſome to whoſe hands peradventure this may come, when I have ſeen what a *Good Beginning* they have made in the way of God, and have been as *pleaſant plants*, and hopeful to bring forth much fruit to the Honour of God and comfort of his People, and eſpecially to the Comfort and Salvation of their own Immortal Souls: And yet after ſome good Progreſs made in the Lords way; for want of a diligent watchfulneſs and keeping cloſe to the daily Croſs, and the Self-denial have laid themſelves open to the Spoylers, who have cunningly got an entrance into them, ſome in the *Affectionate Party*, ſome in the *Wiſe Reaſoning Party*, ſome thorough *Sowing the Seeds of Prejudice*, and ſome *one way* and ſome *another*, and have beguiled them of the Simplicity, and drawn them from the Sincerity that is in the Truth; and ſo they have both loſt their *Firſt Love* and their *Firſt Work* alſo.

And of theſe ſome are ſo far Dead, that they have loſt all Senſe and

and Feeling of that Love of God that worketh in the Hearts of his People, for the regaining of them; and to such I shall say little, but tell them, *My Soul shall mourn for them in secret, until the Lord easeth my Spirit concerning them:* But for the rest who yet do retain something of a Love to the Lords People, and have sometimes an Ear yet open to hear Councel, to these I say, God hath put it into my Heart to warn you, that ye strengthen those things that are ready to dye, before the Lord appear against you for your hard Words and hard Thoughts, and come down into Humility, and feel after the first Tenderness and Brokenness of Heart which once you felt, and hold a fast to the Lord; feed no more upon your Carnal Reasonings, hearken no more to those Seducers that have drawn you from your stedfastness in Christ Jesus, and your place in the Body; for be ye assured, as your Food is, so will your Life be; and if ye will still feed upon the Airy Notions of that Carnal Wisdom; into an Airy, Light and Wanton Life you will grow, and if your Food be to lick up the dirt and foulness that you can find here or there, and to feast thereon, and then be liable to vomit it up again, as some have done; this will nourish nothing but the Serpents life, which the Power of God will overcome. But Dear Hearts, sink down, sink down, while yet an Arm of Love is reached out to you to receive you, and wait in lowliness to be brought into that Heavenly House, where there is meat indeed, and drink indeed, and remember that express sentence of our Lord, who said, *Except you eat my Flesh, and drink my Blood, ye have no Life in you:* This is the Holy Nourishment that nourisheth up the Heir of the Kingdom, into which many are entered, and many of the Dear People of God whom ye count lightly of, are travelling to obtain an entrance.

And Friends, let me use yet one Argument more with you, to perswade you to turn into the Unity and Fellowship of the Truth and Power of God, in which ye sometimes took delight with us to walk in it, and that is an Argument from your own

Experience,

Experience, to wit, the feebleneſs that hath fallen upon many of you, ſince ye departed from the Heavenly Unity with your Antient Friends and Brethren; what a decay of ſtrength and Courage in the bearing forth the ſeveral Teſtimonys for the Name of Chriſt, as they were received from the Beginning, and by the faithful Followers of him, are to this day kept and accounted of; as of more worth then a little Outward Liberty or Eſtate, or ſuch like.

But Oh! my Friends, how is this Tye looſned? and how is Fleſhly Reaſonings gotten up to ſhun the Croſs and the Sufferings that attends the Goſpel, and an unreadineſs in many to give up for his Names ſake, ſo that they are as if they had loſt their Spiritual Armour, and their fervent Zeal and Love to the Truth, and the Teſtimonys of it; which once were dearer to them then they'r all in this Tranſitory World, And it is indeed impoſſible that the love to God and his Truth ſhould remain in its former ſtrength, when the love to the Brethren decays, They came together, and they will go together: And the want of this Love to God and to his People, is the ground of declining Truths Teſtimony, and uſing indirect ways to ſhift and ſhun the Sufferings that comes for Truths ſake, by which the hands of Truths Enemys are ſtrengthened, and many Stumbling-Blocks have been laid in the way of the Weak, I beſeech you to conſider theſe things, and lay them to Heart while there is a day and oppertunity to return to your firſt Love, and to your firſt Zeal for the Truth.

And Dear Friends, I might go into particulars to lay before you, wherein this decay of Love and Zeal for God and his precious Truth is manifeſt in many, But I ſpare you, knowing there is a faithful and true Witneſs for the Lord, that will (if you mind it) ſhew you more particularly wherein any hath failed, and to that Witneſs of God I do recommend what I have written to you, which will teſtify that I have written in true love to your Immortal Souls, And whoſoever ſleights this tender *Warning*, and *Exhortation* ſent unto them in the Love of God, will but harden their own Hearts more and more, and lay themſelves open to the *Seducing Spirits*, to be carryed away by the Wiles of ſubtle Men, who ſeek to draw from the Foundation that God hath laid, and to bring you again to truſt to *Uncertainties*, and to fill your Minds with *Unneceſſary Things*, and to neglect the weighty matters, and the one thing needful.

Therefore Friends, wait to feel the daily *renewings* by the Holy Spirit in your ſelves, and that will *renew* your love to God and to his Truth and the Teſtimonys of it, and to the *Brethren* that have laboured in it for the good of your Souls, and to all the faithful Followers of the Lamb of God every where, and that will *renew* your *Love* and *Zeal* to the Truth, and to the Teſtimonys of it, and keep it freſh, and give you a *ſenſe* of the *exceeding* great value of it, and then you will ſee that the *ſervice* of all that is given you, is but to ſerve the Lord in his Truth, and in the Holy Faith you will have a *ſenſe* of the *Reward* of all in your own Boſom, that ye looſe and ſuffer for the Lords ſake, and in this you will have an *Inheritance* with all the *Sanctified Children* of Light, which that ye all may poſſeſs and none fall ſhort of, is the *Eearneſt Deſire* and *Prayer* of your faithful *Friend* in the Unchangable Truth,

S. C.

THE END.